



**Judicial
Watch®**
*Because no one
is above the law!*



May 9, 2017

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Freedom of Information Officer
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW (2822T)
Washington, DC 20460

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear Freedom of Information Officer:

Judicial Watch, Inc. ("Judicial Watch") hereby requests that the Environmental Protection Agency produce the following records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 ("FOIA"):

Any and all records regarding, concerning, or related to the Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigation Division's investigation of Abound Solar, a defunct manufacturer of solar panels that was headquartered in Loveland, Colorado. This request includes, but is not limited to, any and all investigative reports and other documents created during the course of and pursuant to the investigation, as well as any and all related records of communication between any official, agent, employee, or representative of the Environmental Protection Agency and any official, agent, employee, or representative of any other branch, department, agency, or office of the federal government.

For purposes of clarification, please find enclosed an excerpt from the Department of the Treasury Office of Inspector General case log documenting the Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigation Division's involvement in the aforementioned investigation.

Please determine whether to comply with this request within the time period required by FOIA and notify us immediately of your determination, the reasons therefor, and the right to appeal any adverse determination to the head of the agency or his or her designee. 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(i). Please also produce all responsive records in an electronic format ("pdf" is preferred), if convenient. We also are willing to accept a "rolling production" of responsive records if it will facilitate a more timely production.

Judicial Watch also hereby requests a waiver of both search and duplication fees.

We are entitled to a waiver of search fees because we are a “representative of the news media.” See 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II); see also *Cause of Action v. Federal Trade Comm.*, 799 F.3d 1108 (D.C. Cir. 2015); *Nat’l Sec. Archive v. U.S. Dep’t of Defense*, 880 F.2d 1381 (D.C. Cir. 1989). For more than twenty years, Judicial Watch has used FOIA and other investigative tools to gather information about the operations and activities of government, a subject of undisputed public interest. We submit over 400 FOIA requests annually. Our personnel, which includes experienced journalists and professional writers on staff and under contract, use their editorial skills to turn this raw information into distinct works that are disseminated to the public via our monthly newsletter, which has a circulation of over 300,000, weekly email update, which has over 600,000 subscribers, investigative bulletins, special reports, www.judicialwatch.org website, *Corruption Chronicles* blog, and social media, including Facebook and Twitter, among other distribution channels. We have authored several books, including *Corruption Chronicles* by Tom Fitton (Threshold Editions, July 24, 2012), and another book, *Clean House* by Tom Fitton (Threshold Editions, Aug. 30, 2016), is forthcoming. In 2012, we produced a documentary film, “District of Corruption,” directed by Stephen K. Bannon. Our “news media” status has been confirmed in court rulings. See, e.g., *Judicial Watch, Inc. v. U.S. Dep’t of Defense*, 2006 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 44003, *1 (D.D.C. June 28, 2006); *Judicial Watch, Inc. v. U.S. Dep’t of Justice*, 133 F. Supp.2d 52 (D.D.C. 2000). As a tax exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, we have no commercial interests and do not seek the requested records for any commercial use. Rather, we intend to use the requested records as part of our on-going investigative journalism and public education efforts to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability in government and fidelity to the rule of law.

Judicial Watch also is entitled to a waiver of both search fees and duplication fees because “disclosure of the information is in the public interest.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii). Disclosure of the requested records undoubtedly will shed light on “the operations or activities of the government.” *Cause of Action*, 799 F.3d at 1115 (quoting 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii)). Disclosure also is “likely to contribute significantly to the public understanding” of those operations or activities because, among other reasons, Judicial Watch intends to disseminate both the records and its findings to “a reasonably broad audience of persons interested in the subject” via its newsletter, email updates, investigative bulletins, website, blog, and its other, regular distribution channels. *Cause of Action*, 799 F.3d at 1116 (quoting *Carney v. U.S. Dep’t of Justice*, 19 F.3d 807, 815 (2d Cir. 1994)). Again, Judicial Watch does not seek the requested records for any commercial benefit or for its own “primary” benefit, but instead seeks them as part of its ongoing investigative journalism and public education efforts to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability in government and fidelity to the rule of law.

In the event our request for a waiver of search and/or duplication costs is denied, Judicial Watch agrees to pay up to \$300.00 in search and/or duplication costs. Judicial Watch requests that it be contacted before any such costs are incurred, in order to prioritize search and duplication efforts.

EPA

May 9, 2017

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If you do not understand this request or any portion thereof, or if you feel you require clarification of this request or any portion thereof, please contact us immediately at 202-646-5172 or sdunagan@judicialwatch.org.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SD', is positioned above the printed name.

Sean Dunagan
Judicial Watch, Inc.

888-45-1457

SCAM-15-1292-1 ET AL.
(SCAM) SCAM-15-1292-4

REP-14-1286-1 SPECIMEN NOTES REP-14-1286-1

DO-12-2650-I INC (ARBA) DO-2650-I

§ 87(2)(b) SA [redacted] advised that the investigation was at the beginning stages and deferred from a site visit reviewed by the Department of Justice (DOJ). SA [redacted] referred DOJ to the CD for additional information. On 09/02/2012, DOJ contacted SA [redacted] EPA/DO, Denver, CO, regarding the investigation. SA [redacted] said he is investigating [redacted] for possible allegations of withholding hazardous waste. In addition, SA [redacted] said the investigation may involve allegations of costly performing products produced by DOE. SA [redacted] said the investigation also may involve approximately 170 Million of \$500 Millions now guaranteed by DOE. SA [redacted] said the initial contact was received DOJ as a site team. SA [redacted] had held for Chapter 7 bankruptcy. SA [redacted] contact information is below. SA [redacted] United States Environmental Protection Agency
 Criminal Investigations Division, Mail Code [redacted]
 [redacted]

772-15-15374 772-15-15375 772-15-15376

[illegible]

DO-14-0303-1 [REDACTED] DO-14-0303-1

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

8F5-14-1511-4 8F5-14-1511-5

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DO-14-0770-1 DO-14-0770-1

J. Polym. Sci. Part A: Polym. Chem. **46**, 709–718 (2008)
DOI 10.1002/pola.22255

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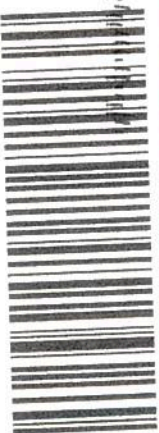
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Environmental Protection Agency
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Washington, DC 20460



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